



# NEWS RELEASE

## HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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### **Howard County police to focus on safety in school zones**

As children prepare to return to school next week, Howard County police are working to ensure that students, parents, teachers and staff arrive safely. Through a continuing back-to-school program, officers will focus on enforcing speed, seat belt and child safety seat laws in school zones.

The H.A.S.T.E. program (Helping Arriving Students Through Enforcement) is aimed at raising awareness about traffic safety in school zones. Targeted patrols will be in place on roadways surrounding elementary, middle and high schools for the first two weeks of the school year. Officers will be working to identify drivers who are speeding in those areas.

In addition, to aid in speed enforcement efforts, two new portable camera units are being rotated near 13 schools. These portable units will be used on roadways with issues of excessive speed, but on which speed enforcement vans cannot be safely used. A new school zone is also being added near the new Ducketts Lane Elementary School, in Elkridge.

In March 2013, Howard County Police Chief William McMahon presented to the County Council the first year report for the speed camera program. The report showed that the program had seen great success, with speeds reduced in 65 percent of school zones. His report to the council, which may be found online at [www.hcpd.org](http://www.hcpd.org), also outlined the use of portable camera units (PCUs) on roadways where the program's van placement was problematic. Beginning at the start of the new school year, the program will be rotating two portable camera units among the following locations:

- Atholton High School – Freetown Road
- Bushy Park Elementary School – Carrs Mills Road
- Dayton Oaks Elementary School – Ten Oaks Road
- Pointers Run Elementary School – Great Star Drive walking route
- Swansfield Elementary School - Cedar Lane
- St. Johns Lane Elementary School – St. Johns Lane
- Mt. Hebron High School – St. Johns Lane
- Centennial Lane Elementary School – Centennial Lane
- Long Reach High School – Tamar Drive
- Forest Ridge elementary School – Gorman Road
- Guilford Elementary School – Oakland Mills Road
- Glenelg High School – Burntwoods Road
- Jeffers Hill Elementary School - Tamar Drive

(more)

Officers will focus not only on the roads around the schools, but will be working inside the schools as well. Police are again conducting mandatory traffic safety seminars for students applying for school parking permits, who must attend with their parents. The program, called “You are Responsible,” is a collaborative effort between the police department, the Howard County Public School System and the Howard County Health Department. After a 45- minute program presentation, students can sign up to be part of “Courtesy on the Road” in which courteous teen drivers are eligible for prizes. The program also includes a Parent/Teen Driving Agreement, which outlines rewards and sanctions for good and bad decisions regarding driving behaviors.

Young drivers also benefit from the police department’s Collision Avoidance Training (CAT) program, an advanced defensive driving and vehicle control for drivers ages 16-20 possessing a Class C driver’s license. The next available class takes place Sept. 20-21. Please visit [www.hcpd.org](http://www.hcpd.org) for further information.

Also, as the school year begins, officers will be checking for seat belt and child safety seat use to ensure that all children, teenagers and adults are properly restrained.

Police also are reminding drivers that they are required to stop for school buses with red lights flashing. Officers in covert vehicles will follow school buses to watch for drivers who fail to stop.

The police department will continue to conduct traffic safety education and enforcement efforts throughout the school year.

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